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C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 8921

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TAGS: TECH TPHY PINT UR US

SUBJ: USSR ACADEMY OF SCIENCES: HANDLING OF US EXCHANGES

1. SCICOUNS AND SCIOFF MET JUNE 18 WITH ACADEMY OF SCIENCES OFFICIALS, A.N. KULAKOV (CHIEF, FOREIGN RELATIONS DEPARTMENT), V.P. BABKAYEV (DEPUTY CHIEF, USA SECTION), AND A.M. KHARITONOV (USA SECTION) TO EXPLORE WAYS ACADEMY MIGHT IMPROVE ITS FACILITATIVE SERVICES FOR US EXCHANGEES AND VISITORS IN USSR UNDER ACADEMY AUSPICES.

2. SCICOUNS EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER RECENT PROBLEMS INVOLVING UNAVAILABILITY OF HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS IN MOSCOW AND LENINGRAD WHICH HAD RESULTED IN PARTIAL DELETION OF PLANNED PROGRAMS FOR TWO US EXCHANGEES AND CANCELLATION OF SEMINAR/LECTURE SERIES BY US VISITOR. HE NOTED THAT, WHILE ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS SUCH AS ARRANGEMENTS FOR HOTEL ROOMS WERE DECIDELY MINOR MATTERS IN CONTEXT OF NUMEROUS ACHIEVEMENTS IN PROJECTS OF SCIENTIFIC COOPERATION, PROBLEMS IN THIS AREA COULD AND DID GENERATE COUNTERPRODUCTIVE DELAYS, CANCELLATIONS OF ACTIVITIES AND ILL-WILL. HE EXPRESSED ESPECIAL REGRET THAT THESE PROBLEMS COULD AS WELL POSE INSUPERABLE OBSTACLES TO THE FULFILLMENT OF USEFUL COOPERATIVE PROJECTS. CITED AS RECENT INSTANCES WERE LAST-MINUTE CANCELLATION OF PLANNED LABORATORY VISITS AND CON-

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SULTATIONS IN LENINGRAD FOR CHEMICAL CATALYSIS

EXCHANGEES MINER AND BRUNS, (BRUNS REQUESTED SUBSTITUTION OF KIEV) DUE TO UNAVAILABILITY OF HOTEL ROOMS, AND CANCELLATION OF TWO-WEEK LECTURE/SEMINAR SERIES BY HARVEY WAGNER, DUE TO ACADEMY'S FAILURE TO PROVIDE QUALITY OF HOTEL AND SERVICES WAGNER HAD BEEN LED TO EXPECT. (WAGNER SPENT NIGHT OF JUNE 16/17 SITTING IN HOTEL LOBBY AND ANGRILY DEPARTED MOSCOW JUNE 17 AFTER CANCELLING ENTIRE PROGRAM.) SCICOUNS STRESSED THAT HE WISHED EXPLORE SUCH MATTERS SOLELY IN ORDER AVOID THEIR RECURRENCE IN FUTURE, AND FURTHER SUGGESTED VARIOUS MEASURES ACADEMY MIGHT WISH CONSIDER ADOPTING TO IMPROVE FACILITATIVE PROCEDURES TO MUTUAL BENEFIT OF BOTH SIDES.

3. KULAKOV AND BABAKAYEV INITIALLY REJECTED SUGGESTION THAT SERVICE ACADEMY OFFERED US EXCHANGEES WAS IN ANY RESPECT INADEQUATE OR LESS SATISFACTORY THAN THAT OFFERED BY SCST, HYDROMET, OR OTHER SOVIET ORGANIZATIONS WHICH ALSO PARTICIPATED IN EXCHANGE PROGRAMS. LENGTHY AND LIVELY DISCUSSION WHICH ENSUED PRODUCED COMMITMENT FROM KULAKOV THAT ACADEMY WULD REDOUBLE EFFORTS TO AVOID ADMINISTRATIVE AND SUPPORT DIFFICULTIES FOR US EXCHANGEES. HE AGREED ARRANGE PROGRAM FOR BRUNS TO VISIT KIEV INSTITUTES AS ALTERNATIVE TO LENINGRAD VISIT. (THIS MATERIALIZED AT LAST MOMENT, SEVERAL DAYS AFTER BRUNS RETURNED TO MOSCOW NOT KNOWING WHETHER VISIT POSSIBLE.) DISSATISFACTION OF WAGNER WAS ATTRIBUTED TO SIMPLE MISCONCEPTIONS ON HIS PART, IN WHICH REGARD KULAKOV EXPRESSED WRY HOPE THAT US SCIENTISTS WOULD NOT "BEHAVE LIKE CINEMA STARS" IN EXPECTING ACCOMMODATIONS OR SERVICES UNAVAILABLE IN MOSCOW, EXPECIALLY SINCE SOVIET SCIENTISTS, HE ASSERTED, WERE MUCH MORE MODEST IN THIER REQUIREMENTS WHEN IN THE U.S. DISCUSSION OF SUBJECT CONCLUDED ON CONGENIAL NOTE WITH RECOUNTING OF ANECDOTE INVOLVING LAST YEAR'S VISIT TO MOSCOW OF ACTUAL CINEMA STAR (ELIZABETH TAYLOR).

4. COMMENT: EMBASSY HOPEFUL THAT DISCUSSION MAY RESULT IN IMPROVEMENT IN FUTURE ARRANGEMENTS MADE BY
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ACADEMY. KULAKOV APPEARS A CONSIDERABLE IMPROVEMENT OVER KORNEYEV, WHO WAS INFLEXIBLE AND HARDLY ACCESSIBLE. EMBASSY WILL CONTINUE TO MONITOR PROGRAMS FOR FORTH-COMING VISITS WITH CONSIDERABLE INTEREST.

5. SCICOUNS ALSO TOOK OPPORTUNITY TO REQUEST EXPLANATION, ON BEHALF OF NAS, FOR ACADEMY'S

UNWILLINGNESS TO ACCEPT DR. BERGGREN FOR FULL PROGRAM AT THIS TIME, AS STATED IN KULAKOV TELEGRAM TO NAS OF JUNE 6. IN REPLY, KULAKOV OFFERED EXPLANATION THAT, IN ARRANGING PROGRAM FOR SUCH EXCHANGES, ACADEMY ROLE IS LIMITED MERELY TO REQUEST FOR COOPERATION DIRECTED TO INDIVIDUAL INSTITUTES INVOLVED. EACH INSTITUTE THEN INDIVIDUALLY DETERMINES CONVENIENT DATES, DURATION AND PERSONNEL AVAILABLE TO COOPERATE IN PROGRAM. ACADEMY WAS CHARACTERIZED AS BEING "UNABLE

TO IMPOSE PROGRAM" ON INSTITUTES, AS THEY ARE "ENTIRELY INDEPENDENT OF ACADEMY". KULAKOV ELABORATED THAT, IN BERGGREN CASE, RESPONSE TO ACADEMY REQUEST AMOUNTED TO TOTAL OF 34 DAYS OF POSSIBLE JOINT WORK. WITH TRAVEL AND FREE DAYS, THIS WOULD AMOUNT TO MAXIMUM STAY IN USSR OF TWO MONTHS. AVAILABILITY OF SCIENTISTS AT VARIOUS INSTITUTES FURTHER RENDERED EVEN THIS SHORT VISIT IMPOSSIBLE BEFORE OCTOBER 1. KULAKOV EXPRESSED HOPE THAT BERGGREN WOULD FIND PROGRAM ACCEPTABLE AND REGRETTED THAT ACADEMY WAS POWERLESS TO ARRANGE PROGRAM AT THIS TIME.

6. COMMENT: EMBASSY HIGHLY SKEPTICAL OF MODEST CHARACTERIZATION OF ACADEMY AS SIMPLE CLEARINGHOUSE FOR EXCHANGE PROGRAMS CONTROLLED BY DECISIONS OF AUTONOMOUS INSTITUTES IMPERVIOUS TO ACADEMY PRESSURE. EMBASSY RECEIVED INFORMATION FROM RECENT EXCHANGE MINER THAT ALMA-ATA SCIENTISTS TERRIBLY DISAPPOINTED THAT JOHN TURKEVICH COULD NOT COME TO THEIR INSTITUTE AND WERE ANXIOUS TO HAVE HIM VISIT IN THE FUTURE (MOSCOW 4236, 4256, STATE 73049). EMBASSY VIEWS KULAKOV EXPLANATION AS REFLECTION OF ACADEMY DESIRE TO GIVE APPEARANCE RESPONSIVENESS TO NAS REQUEST, CONFIDENTIAL

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WHILE AT SAME TIME EXERCISING PREROGATIVE UNDER AGREEMENT TO DECLINE TO ACCEPT EXCHANGE.

7. EMBASSY IS INEVITABLY PUSHED TO CONCLUSION THAT USSR ACADEMY OF SCIENCES ADMINISTRATIVE EXCHANGE PRACTICES HAVE CHANGED LITTLE OVER THE LAST YEARS. FOREIGN RELATIONS DEPARTMENT CONTINUED UNTIL NOW POLICY OF (RANDOM?) SHUT-OUTS AND CANCELLATIONS WITHOUT BELIEVABLE EXPLANATION FOR MAJORITY OF GENERAL EXCHANGES AND IN SOME CASES EVEN S&T PROGRAMS. EMBASSY HOPES THAT WAYS WILL BE FOUND TO INDUCE THE USSR ACADEMY TO ESTABLISH A MORE BUSINESS-LIKE AS WELL AS MORE RECIPROCAL AND BALANCED RELATIONSHIP IN THE FUTURE. WHETHER KULAKOV COULD HELP TO BRING IT ABOUT REMAINS TO BE SEEN.

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